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AUTHOR Sutton, John M., Jr.; Southworth, Robert S.
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ABSTRACT

An awareness of the present and future training needs of practicing school guidance counselors could be very useful for faculty of counselor education programs. To determine what type of training Maine counselors desired and needed, the University of Southern Maine had 302 school counselors complete questionnaires assessing their professional development needs. Survey results were divided into four sections: biographical information, current professional development activities, future training needs, and miscellaneous counselor interests. Responses showed that Maine school counselors are relatively young (81 percent are in their 40s or younger), and that they participate in few professional activities. They indicated interest in many training topics (small group and substance abuse counseling were most frequently listed), and a variety of training formats. (Recommendations based on survey results are listed for the University of Maine counselor education programs, the Maine Department of Education, the Maine Personnel and Guidance Association, and for all counselor education units. The survey instrument is included.) (BH)

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A Survey of the Professional Development Activities of School Guidance Counselors in the State of Maine: Analysis and Recommendations:

Conducted by:

John M. Sutton, Jr.

Robert S. Southworth

1984

Dr. Sutton is Associate Professor of Human Resource Development in the Department of Human Resource Development at the University of Southern Maine.

Dr. Southworth is Professor of Educational Psychology in the Department of Human Resource Development at the University of Southern Maine.

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Introduction

During the last few years, the Counselor Education Program faculty at the University of Southern Maine have attempted to discover what type of training practicing counselors desired and needed, as well as how they wanted that training delivered. This was the primary motive behind the survey. In addition, we felt we needed this information so that we could adjust our pre-service curriculum to better prepare our graduates to assume the role of a school guidance counselor. Lastly, we were interested in using this information so that reasonable debate could take place about the present status of professional development and future needs as seen by school guidance counselors in Maine. We felt that this debate is important for counselors themselves, as they could benefit from an awareness of the present and future needs of counselors in Maine. It is assumed that they would be able to identify some of their own needs and take advantage of training opportunities presently available. Also, we anticipate that educational administrators who have a responsibility for training could use this information in assisting counselors in meeting their professional development needs.

The study was based on a survey of the 393 active school counselors as identified in the counselor directory distributed by the Maine Department of Education and Cultural Services (MDECS). The survey entailed the mailing of a questionnaire (Appendix 1) to those counselors during the first week of April, 1982. After two weeks, a postcard was sent as a reminder to those who had not responded. Two weeks later, another blank questionnaire and cover letter were sent to each of the counselors who still had not responded to the initial request for information. The total number of completed questionnaires received following the last reminder was 302 out of the 393 Maine school counselors initially contacted. This resulted in a 77% return rate; therefore, it is assumed that this sample of school counselors in Maine is representative of all school counselors in the state.

The survey was modified from one developed by the State Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin. We appreciated the opportunity to benefit from the work done by those associated with this project. A special thanks to Dr. William J. Erpenbach of that organization who was so gracious in taking the time to provide and explain this information.

The remainder of this report contains the results of all questions on the survey, followed by an analysis of this data with a final section on recommendations.

Results

The survey is divided into four separate sections. The first section provides general biographical information on those counselors who responded to the survey. The second section presents data on the present state of professional development activities of Maine counselors. The third section

looks toward the future needs of counselors in terms of training interests, type of training and who should offer that training. The remaining section, Miscellaneous, provides information related to counselor interest on a wide range of topics.

Biographical Data

1. There were 176 (59%) male respondents and 124 (41%) female respondents.
2. Eleven percent are in their twenties, 36% in their thirties, 34% in their forties, 17% in their fifties, and 2% are over sixty. Median = 41 years.
3. Eleven percent do not have any teaching experience, whereas 47% have less than six years, 28% have between six and ten years of teaching and 14% have more than ten years of teaching experience. Median = 3.5 years
4. Twenty seven percent have less than five years counseling experience, 27% have between five and nine years of experience, 23% have between 10 and 14 years of experience, and 23% have more than 14 years of experience. Median = 8 years.
5. Seven percent reported their level of assignment as K-6, 17% reported 6-9, 60% reported 9-12 and 16% reported some combination of the three aforementioned levels.
6. Twelve percent reported their certification as K-8, 71% reported 7-12, and 17% reported that they were certified in both elementary (K-8) and secondary (7-12).
7. Thirty eight percent reported that they work alone without the benefit of guidance colleagues, 33% report one colleague, 15% report having two colleagues, and 14% report having three or more colleagues.
8. Ten percent reported having less than 200 students assigned to them, 21% report between 200 and 300 students assigned, 37% report between 300 and 400 students assigned, 17% report having between 400 and 500 students assigned, while 15 % report greater than 500 students assigned. Median = 350.
9. Twenty nine percent reported having a five year guidance certificate, 68% reported having a ten year certificate, and 3% hold a one year license.
10. There are four (1.3%) counselors who hold doctorates, 16% have a certificate of Advanced Study (Masters +30), 79% hold a Masters Degree and 3% have a Bachelors Degree.
11. Most (67%) counselors have received their highest degree within the past ten years.
12. Twenty four percent reported having received their highest degree from USM, 42% received their highest degree from UMO and 34% received their highest degree from an out-of-state institution.

Professional Development Activities

1. Thirty one percent of the respondents are members of APGA.
2. Sixteen percent are members of ASCA.
3. Sixty six percent are members of MEPGA.
4. Twelve percent are members of MESCA.
5. Two percent are members of NSCA.
6. Fifty six percent are members of one of the regional guidance organizations.

7. Less than 1% of counselors attend conferences outside the State of Maine. Thirty eight percent attended the New England Personnel and Guidance conference when it was held in Portland in the Fall of 1980. Approximately 40% attended the MEPGA conference in each of the last two years. Half of the respondents reported that they do not attend regional conferences. Of those who do attend, the average number of conferences attended was two.
8. Seventy six percent of the respondents have not taken a University course in the last year.
9. Fifty three percent did not attend any training program during the past year; of those who did not, the median was one.
10. Approximately 66% of the respondents attended at least one inservice program held within their school district.
11. Twenty five percent report they received no release time for professional development, 40% received between one and 16 hours, 19% received between 17 and 32 hours, and 16% received greater than 33 hours of released time. Median = 8-12 hours
12. Fully 65% of the school districts do not conduct inservice training for guidance counselors.
13. Twenty seven percent reported that they do not read any professional journals, 14% read one, 17% read two, 18% read three, 11% read four, and 13% read more than four journals per month. Median = 1.5.
14. Seventeen percent reported that they do not engage in any self education, 50% spent eight hours or less in self education per month during the school year. Median = 8 hours.
15. Forty four percent reported that they do not engage in any self education during school vacations, 50% spend more than two hours. Median = 2 hours.
16. The participants listed the following reasons for choosing which professional development opportunities to pursue.
    a. I hear of a topic I want to know more about 85%
    b. I hear about a speaker whose presentation I want to attend. 73%
    c. I decide to pursue additional training in a certain area when it becomes a recurring problem or a set of problems on the job. 70%
    d. When I am assigned a new area of responsibility. 39%
    e. When I need additional credits or units for advancement or certification. 39%
17. Seventy two percent said that they do not usually attend all or almost all of the meetings, conferences, or workshops in their immediate (0-50 mile) geographical area.
18. The following are reasons why participants would not attend professional development activities.
    a. Costs too much money for me personally. 57%
    b. Occurs during school time when I cannot get released. 52%
    c. Not sufficiently interested in the topic. 48%
    d. Distance or transportation is a problem. 46%
    e. Too much to do on the job. 43%
    f. Occurs on evenings or weekends and interferes with other activities.
    g. Would have to go alone. 6%

19. Fifty percent of the respondents received less than fifty dollars from their school districts for expenses encurred as a result of professional development activities, 19% received between $50 and $100, 10% received between $100 and $150, 10% received between $151 and $200, and 11% received more than $200. Median = $50.
20. Forty five percent of the respondents spent less than $100 of their own money on professional development activities during the last year, 28% spent between $100 and $200, 11% spent between $200 and $300, 8% spent $300 and $400, and 8% spent more than $400. Median = $120

Future Professional Development Needs and Interests

1. The respondents indicated an interest in receiving training in each of the following major areas. They are listed from most popular to least popular:
   a. Special Populations
   b. Counseling Methods and Techniques
   c. Services Relevant to Educational Agencies
   d. Group Methods and Approaches
   e. Assessment and Research
   f. Program Management
   g. Vocational and Career Development
   h. Professional Concerns
   i. Consultation
   j. Special Education/Pupil Evaluation Team

2. The respondents indicated that the following specific topics were those they were most interested in receiving some form of training:

	Number of Responses
a. Drug Abuse and Alcohol Counseling	73
b. Small Group Counseling	53
c. Counseling Students from Single Parent Homes	52
d. Services for Dropouts and Potential Dropouts	46
e. Counseling the Abused Child	44
f. Planning a Comprehensive Career Education Project	43
g. Computer Assisted Guidance and Counseling	42
h. Micro Computer Usage	40
i. Peer Counseling	38
j. Crisis Intervention	35
k. Approaches for Students with Learning Disabilities	31
l. Disciplinary/Attendance Problems	27
m. Test Interpretation	26
n. Decision-Making	24
o. Legal Concerns in Guidance and Counseling	22
p. Approaches with Gifted and Talented Students	22
q. Evaluation of Counseling Effectiveness	21
r. Guidance Needs of Students/Staff	20
s. Counselor in the Classroom	20
t. Career Exploration	20
u. Behavior Modification	19
v. Legal Concerns	19
w. Marriage and Family Counseling	19
x. Change Agent Skills	18
y. Parent Group Techniques	18

3. Forty five percent of the respondents preferred that their professional development training take place in the form of a workshop, 16% preferred university courses, 12% preferred summer institutes, and the remaining 28% were divided among three other choices, on-site inservice workshops, extension courses, or conferences.
4. The following indicates respondent's willingness to participate in training programs based upon the areas identified in number 2:

Definitely Yes	21%
Probably Yes	63%
Undecided	12%
Probably No	3%
Definitely No	1%

5. Sixty two percent of the respondents felt that the University should have the responsibility for conducting formal training programs, 20% felt the MDECS should have this responsibility, 16% felt that the MEPGA should assume this responsibility while 3% chose other agencies.

Miscellaneous

The last section of the survey contained a list of topics of interest and respondents were asked to rate the intent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement:

Topic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indiff.	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Accountability of Counselors	60	34	5	1	0
Reciprocity of Certification	29	44	25	1	1
Competency Based Training	19	46	29	5	1
Teaching Experience Needed for Counselor Certification	41	27	10	11	11
Licensure for Counselors	30	42	19	6	3
Collective Bargaining	15	28	42	9	6
Protection of Human Rights	53	40	7	0	0
Counselor as a Change Agent	41	47	12	0	0
Child Advocacy Role	49	41	9	1	0
Government Relations Activities for Counselors	6	22	58	11	3
Violence in Schools	24	57	11	6	2
Professional Growth Through Professional Activities	43	49	7	1	0
Counselor Responsibility for Student Discipline Supervision	2	14	8	37	39
Computerized Information Systems	28	47	21	3	1
Impact of TV on Children	11	46	37	6	0
Community Based Guidance Programs	18	52	24	5	1
Counselor Leadership in Career Ed	26	58	14	2	0
Combination Counselor/Teacher Role	9	26	23	27	15
Paraprofessionals/Technicians in Guidance	11	44	25	16	4
Counselor as Consultant	44	46	8	2	0
Elementary School Guidance and Counseling	41	46	6	6	1

Topic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indiff.	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Confidentiality for Counselors	81	16	2	1	0
Privileged Community for Counselor	78	19	2	1	0
Work With Gifted and Talented Persons	19	54	24	2	1
Back to Basics in Education	13	35	29	17	6
Child Abuse and Neglect	55	43	2	0	0
PET Process	20	60	13	6	1

Analysis of Data

Biographical Data

An overall perspective of the Maine school counselors can be noted and, in addition, a base is established from which their professional development activities and preferences may be analyzed.

The results indicate that 59% of the respondents are male with 70% of the total respondents being between 31 and 50 years of age and with 19% older than 50. Their experience is in the same vein, for 60% have taught less than five years and 54% have less than ten years of counseling. School counselors in Maine are a relatively younger group than is true nationally and entered the profession with only a few years of teaching. It would appear, they have many years ahead of them as counselors. This seems to indicate that in the present placement market due to retirement there will not be a large number of openings for the next ten to fifteen years. Of course other factors can radically alter that probability. Legislative changes, whether national and/or state, may create significant changes in the number of counselor positions or an exodus from the ranks for this would affect that market placement. However, it must be realized that the major need for counselors in Maine will be to fill vacancies caused by those leaving the field through death, retirement, and career changes. Based on past experience, we estimate that will mean about a 10-15% turnover (40-60 positions) per year. Counselor educators within the University system should be aware of the relatively limited need for counselors when advising potential candidates and when setting program limits. Persons considering school counseling as a career must be cognizant of the probable small number of openings.

It is important to note whether the counselors work in elementary or secondary school settings. Traditionally, counselors have been centered in secondary schools in spite of the growing awareness of child development issues. The work setting of the counselors is important to consider. It is an interesting commentary on Maine education that about 50% of the school population is served by 92% of the counselors. This is a serious concern, yet has received little attention in Maine. There are very few jobs available for elementary counselors, consequently masters level training programs at both campuses have few students. The argument that guidance could have its greatest impact at the elementary level seems to fall on deaf ears. Even when educators and citizens indicate an understanding of the need, no support is provided. It is most unfortunate that guidance had its earliest beginnings in the secondary

school to be followed fifty years later by the NDEA Act of 1958 which provided the profession with its greatest impetus for growth. This federal law, designed to identify and encourage students to enter science and engineering, was ill-conceived as it never included elementary guidance. It is another case of short term gains leading to long term losses. We are now faced with a well entrenched guidance system for grades 7-12 which may bode well for older students, but creates serious problems for the needed expansion of guidance services to students at the elementary level. This is an apparent contradiction to the commonly accepted view that younger children, while in their more formative years, can be better helped as learners and as people. The lack of elementary school counselors is a major handicap in presenting excellent education for children and that point must be given serious consideration by Maine educators and citizens. A related issue is the availability of counselors and how many students are served by those counselors. When actual workloads are considered, less than one-third meet the optimum ratio of 250 students to one counselor and about one-third are responsible for over 400 students each. The latter is clearly too many students for reasonable working conditions. Most of the respondents with high student-counselor ratios are in elementary schools, where workloads are notoriously heavy for teachers as well as for counselors.

The lack of elementary school counselors and the serious funding problems have created an impossible dilemma. The solution in many cases has been that "some is better than none." This has resulted in an inordinately high counselor-student ratio, usually well beyond reasonable limits. Another situation has developed with even more disastrous results--the common practice of assigning a counselor to serve several schools. This practice has resulted in a plethora of counselors who are overworked, frustrated, and "burned out," to say nothing about the students who receive little or no benefit from infrequent counselor availability. This clearly needs to be addressed by all concerned.

Another point about counselor work settings is that 38% work alone and another 48% have only one or two colleagues. This means there is a definite dearth of internal support systems and implies that fewer opportunities for training and education would be available. Given the above situation, maintaining a defined role must be very difficult for those individuals.

Professional Development Activities

Memberships and Attendance. One indicator of the commitment of individuals to their own professional development can be judged by their membership in, and attendance at, their professional organizations. It seems significant that only a small number of Maine school counselors are involved in their professional associations. A later discussion will focus on reasons. First, data on membership:

Organization	Membership
American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA)	31%
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	17%
Maine Personnel and Guidance Association (MEPGA)	71%
Maine Elementary School Counselor Association (MESCA)	15%
Maine School Counselor Association	3%
Regional	57%

The evidence is clear, the respondents are not "joiners" of their professional organizations. When only 57% belong to their regional associations--meetings of which they could attend more easily and which have minimal dues as well as provide the opportunity for collegial exchange, the commitment to their professional associations can be questioned. National membership is even more striking. The APGA has many benefits, including a journal and newspaper; yet less than one-third joined. A disturbing note is that only 17% belong to ASCA, their own professional organization within APGA, and only 1% belong to the group work association even though many respondents indicated a need for training in that area.

That commitment is more clearly indicated when actual attendance is considered since only about 40% attended meetings and conferences in-state. That figure is consistent whether one considers local regional meetings (only 28% attended 2 or more such meetings), the 1982 MEPGA meeting (only 42% attended) or the 1980 New England Personnel and Guidance Conference (38% attended). Attendance at national conferences was about 1% and only 5% attended the New England Personnel and Guidance Conference at Hartford in 1981.

It is clear that there was a major difference between in-state and out-of-state attendance. Out-of-state attendance probably is restricted by lack of funds and work schedule. Local attendance should not suffer because of those two reasons; yet, it was not good. Other reasons must be involved. Also, membership is not limited by lack of school system support since it depends on a personal commitment.

Education and Training. Another measure of professional development is the training and/or education sought and attained by individuals. Results of this survey indicate that 76% of the respondents have taken no university courses in the last calendar year and 53% participated in no short-term non-credit training during the same period. Further, 45% had no inservice education during school hours while 40% had a minimal amount, no more than 2 days, of such training. It is recognized that time can be a factor; thus, a question sought to ascertain such information about released time. It appears that 25% had no released time, whereas 41% had no more than 2 days. Whether such time was requested by respondents or whether it was requested and denied is uncertain. Further data provide possible information about that point in that 85% did not participate in summer inservice, 30% had no "after-school" inservice education, and 65% had no district inservice participation. It appears that even when released time is not an issue, the majority of respondents did not participate in inservice activities.

An additional point about professional commitment to self improvement is apparent in that 27% reported that they read no professional journals and another 14% read only one journal. One can be even more aware of the issue because 17% reported spending no time per month, while a total of 50% spent less than 8 hours per month on self improvement. The commitment during vacations was even less in that 44% indicated they spent no time and 50% spent less than 2 hours per month on self improvement during vacations. Thus, even when there was no issue of released time or busy work schedule, few considered it important, to spend time on professional self improvement.

Summary. An interesting picture emerges about the professional development of the school counselors. It is apparent that a significant percentage did not participate in the various professional activities--whether joining, attending meetings or taking part in education and/or training. It is probable that many did engage in one or more professional activities; yet, it is also probable that such engagement was narrowly and sparsely focused since no professional activity had the participation expected of members of an organized profession. Overall, the majority did little to improve their professional level of functioning. The authors definitely recognize that limited inservice opportunities were provided by school systems; yet the lack of counselor self improvement efforts is striking.

A question must be posed. Are guidance counselors any different than members of any other profession? True, the lack of clarity in job descriptions and standards presents problems. However, APGA, ASCA and HEPGA standards exist for professional definition. The central point is that lack of clarity, low pay, etc. cannot be used to avoid consideration of the need for establishment of some stronger minimum standards for post-degree education and training, whatever reasonable form they take. The present requirement that an educator complete five to ten years is unreasonable given our changing environment, explosion of knowledge and advent of new systems. Don't most other helping professions require education for license/certification renewal? It is a small wonder that guidance counselors struggle so hard to be recognized as professionals. Frankly, we believe that establishment of more stringent minimum standards for continuing education would enable counselors to prove their professional commitment and enable them to expect more recognition as members of a profession.

Factors Inhibiting Professional Development. The authors recognize that many external factors affect participation in professional activities. A significant factor is the lack of support provided by the local school districts. Noteworthy is that 88% of the respondents received less than $200 in expense money for professional development and 57% said that money was a factor in their non-attendance at meetings. About 52% indicated that they were not able to obtain released time for professional meetings and 38% stated that meetings interfered with local area activities. Those points are ample evidence that a school counselors's professional growth depends on the support and encouragement of local school officials. The data indicate that such support is lacking and that many probably suffer in professional development because of that fact.

Of course, there are personal factors that affect professional development activities. It should be noted that 45% of the respondents stated that they spent less than $100 on professional development and a total of 73% spent less than $200. It appears that the financial commitment of counselors is less than optimum. The authors believe that members of a profession must be willing to commit not only time but a reasonable expenditure of money. This needs to be a joint commitment on the part of local school district and individual counselors.

Other reasons given included a lack of interest in a meeting's agenda (48%), no released time (52%), too busy (43%), and transportation problems (46%). It is apparent that school districts have made it difficult for counselors to learn by virtue of not giving released time or money. It is, however, known that many districts allow one counselor per school to attend specific meetings with the assumption that the person will report back to the other counselors. If only one counselor attended from some schools, that would have adversely affected attendance at professional meetings and conferences with the resulting effect of lower reported attendance. However, over 1/3 of the respondents work alone with another 50% having only one or two colleagues. It's clear that those who work alone must attend and participate in order to learn, yet, it seems they do not have the released time. Also, attending would mean work not accomplished and it is noted that about 43% indicated they were too busy. Being too busy is an often heard complaint in many professions these days. It is nice to be wanted and needed, but being too busy can also result in a narrow focus. It is a short term solution that disregards the long term effects. Professional development time will often have additional benefits in terms of one's mental health as well as provide a distant view of day to day problems that can be refreshing and helpful.

Reasons for Pursuing Education and/or Training. In spite of the seemingly gloomy data, many respondents did pursue additional training during the year of the survey. They sought such opportunities when they were interested (85%), believed the speaker would provide knowledge (73%), and when they recognized the need for additional training (70%). Thus, it appears that respondent counselors did avail themselves of some educational opportunities. It was apparent that they were selective, evident in the responses that interest was a factor in their choices, and that external factors, lack of administrative support (released time and money) affected participation in professional development activities. Participation apparently depended on more personal reasons than on general professional needs. Yet, the limited participation and personal reasons vs. professional needs causes concern about the commitment of counselors to their own professional development. Steps must be taken to improve the level of participation. Thus, the second part of the survey which sought answers about what would be of value to those who are planning professional development programs for counselors.

Future Professional Development Needs and Interests. The survey provided each respondent the opportunity to review an extensive list of topics that have relevance for the guidance profession. After reviewing this list, they were asked to select six topics in which training would be most useful.

The results from this question will be listed in two ways. First, each major topic heading is listed by priority based on the number of responses recorded for each of the subtopics within that area.

1. Special Populations
2. Counseling Methods and Techniques
3. Services Relevant to Educational Agencies
4. Group Methods and Approaches
5. Assessment and Research
6. Program Management
7. Vocational and Career Development
8. Professional Concerns
9. Consultation
10. Special Education/Pupil Evaluation Team

The response to this portion of the survey is interesting to say the least. The top priority by a wide margin was "Special Populations." This seems to fly in the face of one of the most basic tenets of guidance, that guidance is for all students. On the other hand, it could be argued that as counselors move toward providing more comprehensive services to all students, additional information and skills are necessary. Yet, some caution must be observed or this movement toward special students could become so consuming that counselors may find themselves spending the majority of their time with a majority of students, thus losing sight of a primary counselor role. This is a serious dilemma that should not be taken lightly since it is uncertain whether counselors are seeking additional information or additional skills. It can be argued that additional information about special populations is readily available and are special skills actually needed to work with special populations or are there a generic set of skills. This is a serious dilemma.

The topic in the second priority, counseling methods and techniques, must be considered carefully. There were actually many subtopics subsumed within this category. (That list of subtopics is presented below.) Thus, the need was dispersed among topics. That same point should be realized about topic #3. There were many who realized a need for training; but, again, the need was diffused.

Most of the other major topic areas were grouped in relative proximity and their relative positions were predictable. One exception to this was Consultation. Consultation is one of the three major roles defined for guidance counselors. In this survey, over 90% of the respondents agreed that it was a vital role, yet only 37% believed that they needed more information or additional skills. The results are clear, few individuals believed that training in the area of consultation would be useful to them. The reasons for this probably are very complex, but we cannot help speculate that the lack of a precise definition of what is meant by consultation and the necessary skills may be at least part of the apparent inconsistency of the response to this topic area.

Second, the top 15 subtopics are listed in order of their priority as established by the number of responses:

Subtopics	Priority	Number of Responses
Drug Abuse and Alcoholism Counseling	1	73
Small Group Counseling	2	53
Counseling Students from Single Parent Homes	3	52
Services for Dropouts & Potential Dropouts	4	46
Counseling the Abused Child	5	44
Planning a Comprehensive Career Ed Program	6	43
Computer Assisted Guidance & Counseling	7	42
Micro-computer Usage	8	40
Peer Counseling	9	38
Crisis Intervention	10	35
Approaches for Students with Learning Disabilities	11	31
Disciplinary/Attendance Problems	12	27
Test Interpretation	13	26
Decision-Making	14	24
Legal Concerns in Guidance & Counseling	15	22

A study of the subtopic list provides food for thought when one considers the first few topics. First, the difference between the two top priorities is striking. From there, a rather steadily lessening of interest can be noted. The first priority is understandable because it is a major societal issue and is receiving much publicity. The second item is understandable in that there is a growing awareness that by means of group work, one can be effective with more students. When it is noted that most counselor education programs require only one course in group work and that those certified before 1970 might not have had a course, the recognition of need is real. The responses to items 3 and 5 probably represent interest in two additional current day problems in America and counselors are finding themselves lacking in requisite skill and knowledge. Item 6 is interesting in that comprehensive career education programs originally were intended to be separate from any department and were to have their own coordinator to insure infusion of the curriculum. Now, with federal money no longer available for such coordination, it is probable that counselors are being given responsibility; thus, there is the need for training.

It seems natural that practitioners would prefer short-term courses or workshops. Intensive one-week courses, Friday evening and Saturday sessions, as well as one credit courses, should be made available to aid counselors in gaining the knowledge and skill without having to participate in lengthy, traditional courses.

The results of this section are quite clear. These specific topics provide information which can be used to plan a variety of training programs which would be presented in many ways for practicing counselors.

A second part of this same question asked respondents to rank order which method of delivery for training would be most appropriate. Delivery modes are listed in order of priority.

1. Short-term workshops
2. Conferences
3. In-service
4. University courses
5. Summer Institutes
6. Extension courses

What is not indicated above is that "short-term workshops/delivery" mode was the overwhelming favorite by 3 to 1 over all other choices. Given the time constraints that almost everyone feels, it is understandable that this would prove to be the modality of choice. University of Maine faculty, MDECS personnel and MEPGA staff should cooperate in planning and offering such training. The cooperative ventures could be exciting and valuable.

It is to be noted that fully 84% of the respondents indicated a level of willingness to participate in formal training programs. That is very exciting and encouraging but evidence is necessary. Given what the counselors indicated they did during the survey year, their commitment can be questioned. Would those new topics draw them? Would the different formats result in greater participation? Would the University, MDECS and MEPGA joint ventures help? Many more questions can be posed but answers will not be forthcoming until the first offerings.

The last question in this section dealt with those who would most likely conduct this training. The results indicated the University to be the most favored choice as 62% ranked them highest. The Maine Department of Education and Cultural Services (MDECS) (20%) and the professional organizations (16%) were favored by somewhat fewer counselors.

Clearly, this places responsibility on the University Counselor Education Programs to respond with a variety of training programs. It will be more important, yet more difficult to respond with the training modes that will be acceptable to the majority of counselors because of University requirements. However, it should receive high priority from the University faculties. Yet, planning and service should not be in isolation but in concert with both aforementioned groups. It is hoped that all three agencies will be able to develop and sponsor several different training programs throughout the State.

Miscellaneous

The last section contained a list of topics which were to be rated according to their interest to the profession. The authors have chosen to simply list each topic with the resultant agreement and disagreement percentages. A discussion of some items follows the list.

Topic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indiff.	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
rtification	29	44	25	1	1
Competency Based Training	19	46	29	5	1
Teaching Experience Needed for Counselor Certification	41	27	10	11	11
Licensure for Counselors	30	42	19	6	3
Collective Bargaining	15	28	42	9	6
Protection of Human Rights	53	40	7	0	0
Counselor as a Change Agent	41	47	12	0	0
Child Advocacy Role	49	41	9	1	0
Government Relations Activities for Counselors	6	22	58	11	3
Violence in Schools	24	57	11	6	2
Professional Growth Through Professional Activities	43	49	7	1	0
Counselor Responsibility for Student Discipline Supervision	2	14	8	37	39
Computerized Information Systems	28	47	21	3	1
Impact of TV on Children	11	46	37	6	0
Community Based Guidance Programs	18	52	24	5	1
Counselor Leadership in Career Ed	26	58	14	2	0
Combination Counselor/Teacher Role	9	26	23	27	15
Paraprofessionals/Technicians in Guidance	11	44	25	16	4
Counselor as Consultant	44	46	8	2	0
Elementary School Guidance and Counseling	41	46	6	6	1
Confidentiality for Counselors	81	16	2	1	0
Privileged Community for Counselor	78	19	2	1	0
Work With Gifted and Talented Persons	19	54	24	2	1
Back to Basics in Education	13	35	29	17	6
Child Abuse and Neglect	55	43		0	0
PET Process	20	60	13	6	1

Item 4 indicates that two-thirds believe that teaching should be required. However, all studies support that view where there are no discernable differences after the first year as a school counselor. In fact, some evidence indicates teaching can be detrimental. The licensure issue seems to have strong interest; yet licensure has not been well received in Maine. It has not had much support among Maine counselors in any setting nor from the legislature. Perhaps, with the advent of the APGA counselor licensure program, there will be increased interest in, and acceptance of, the concept. The lack of agreement with two topics, collective bargaining and government relations activities, was striking. The need to be politically active or face funding cuts and legislative restrictions is well known. Yet, the lack of interest in becoming involved is particularly bothersome.

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The responses to the topic, professional growth through professional activities, was interesting to say the least. We return to earlier reported data about what counselors have done. True, this information agrees with the previous list about level of willingness; however, it is contradictory to what the counselors have done. What are the reasons for this contradiction and will they actually do more given different conditions?

Another topic, counselor as consultant, drew interest; yet, there was no interest in training in the topic. Rather intriguing. The reported interest in elementary guidance is laudable, but such interest must be followed by hard work in order for it to occur. Thus, the responses indicating a lack of interest in political activity raises questions about the level of commitment to help occur what is claimed to be desired. The respondents clearly consider confidentiality and privileged communication as very important and that seems reasonable. The topic child abuse provides evidence of interest while earlier responses indicated a need for training. The last topic considered is about the Pupil Evaluation Team process. There was much interest but the question is which role do the counselors assume. Is it as consultant or in a more central active position? It was rated as the lowest of the original ten topics; thus, it is possible to conclude that there is interest in being involved in the process, but that the respondents do not see themselves as major figures in the process.

Summary

The responses to the survey provide an interesting view of Maine school counselors. They are relatively young, and apparently have many years ahead of them in the field. That has major implications for counselor educators and those considering entering the field of school counseling.

A second major point is apparent in that the respondents took part in few professional activities. This was true when one considers a range of activities from spending money, joining professional associations, attending meetings, taking part in in-service training to reading and spending hours on self improvement. It is clearly noted that school systems gave little support--whether financial, released time or planned activities--for professional growth. However, the data speak clearly--the individual counselors made little effort to improve themselves professionally.

Third, counselors indicated interest in many topics for training which should be presented in different formats. That information should be used by the University faculties, DECS personnel and MSPGA staff to plan and deliver relevant training.

Fourth, there are a number of contradictory data reported, primarily between what they have done and what they say is of interest to them and in which they would seek training. The reasons should be pursued to help plan and deliver useful in-service programs.

Fifth, there is a concern on our part about the stated desire for workshops and information around specific problems and populations. The list of special problems/groups could grow endlessly and counselors should end up administering to special populations and special problems rather than considering that they have responsibility to all students and to the "whole child." Development of confidence in self might be one answer to this concern. Thus, the confidence in self, coupled with a strong base of general skills and knowledge could help counselors to cope with a multitude of problems and populations.

Recommendations

Consideration of survey results leads to a number of recommendations for the University Counselor Education Programs, Maine Department of Education and Cultural Services and the Maine Personnel and Guidance Association.

University of Maine Counselor Education Programs

1. Develop short workshops on topic areas of interest as indicated by survey results.
2. Develop new courses within the existing pre-service curriculum to meet needs expressed by respondents.
3. Integrate significant subtopics into existing courses where appropriate.
4. Actively encourage students to join professional organizations.
5. Foster professional development on the part of students through inclusion of the concept within required courses.
6. Examine the need and feasibility for a Certificate of Advanced Study (Master's plus 30) program at the University of Southern Maine.
7. Continue to limit the number of students admitted to approximate current and estimated future needs for school guidance counselors in the State.
8. Conduct additional research into the consequences of the fact that 38% of counselors in Maine work alone and make further recommendations for both pre-service and in-service education to compensate for any shortcomings that may be a result of this isolation.

Maine Department of Education and Cultural Services

1. Begin discussion to establish more rigorous standards for recertification.
2. Consider altering the levels of certification of school counselors in view of the changing configurations of middle/junior high schools which have resulted in a "catch-22" situation for some who want to work at that level.
3. Undertake some concrete steps to improve local district commitment to the professional development of all personnel, especially school guidance counselors.
4. Conduct surveys of the professional development needs of school guidance counselors on a periodic basis to enable more effective planning for future training.

Maine Personnel and Guidance Association

1. Actively encourage all counselors to join and participate in their professional association and in its appropriate branches.
2. Provide training and informational programs that are designed to meet the expressed needs of counselors.
3. Re-activate the licensure committee in light of the increased activity at the national level.

All Units

1. Launch a joint effort to implement these recommendations.
2. Make a special effort to enhance the professional development of those counselors working alone, whether in rural or other settings.
3. Work actively to promote new school guidance positions at the elementary school level.

The authors realize that other recommendations could eminate from the data and believe that the three indicated units should separately and together study the data for more explicit plans of action.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
College of Education
Department of Human Resource Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

1. Sex: ___1. Male ___2. Female

2. Age: ___1. 21-30 years
___2. 31-40 years
___3. 41-50 years
___4. 51-60 years
___5. 61-70 years

3. How many years did you teach before first starting to work as a school counselor?

___1. 0 years
___2. 1-5 years
___3. 6-10 years
___4. 11-20 years
___5. More than 20 years

4. Number of years as a practicing school counselor (50% time or more), counting this year?

___1. 0 years
___2. 1-4 years
___3. 5-9 years
___4. 10-14 years
___5. 15-19 years
___6. More than 19 years

5. Level of current counseling assignment?

___1. Elementary School (approx. grades K-6)
___2. Middle School (approx. grades 6-9)
___3. High School (approx. grades 9-12)
___4. Other or combination (specify)_____

6. Level of Maine guidance certification held?

___1. Elementary (K-8)
___2. Secondary (7-12)
___3. Both elementary and secondary (K-12)

7. Indicate the number of <u>other</u> school counselors in the building in which you work._____

8. Total number of students assigned to you for guidance:

___1. 1-199
___2. 200-299
___3. 300-399
___4. 400-499
___5. 500-599
___6. over 600

9. Type of guidance certification:

___1. One year license
___2. Five Year Provisional
___3. Ten Year Professional

10. Highest level of degree received?

___1. Ed.D./Ph.D.
___2. CAGS/CAS
___3. MS/MA/M.Ed.
___4. BA/BS

11. Year Highest Degree Awarded:

___1. 1979-81
___2. 1976-78
___3. 1973-75
___4. 1970-72
___5. 1967-69
___6. 1964-66
___7. 1961-63
___8. prior to 1961

12. Institution at which highest degree received?

___1. USM
___2. UMO
___3. Out of State

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13. Indicate the extent of your present membership in professional organizations by checking the following items which apply.

Member	Organization	Officer	
_____	1. APGA	_____	_____
_____	2. ASCA	_____	_____
_____	3. ACES	_____	_____
_____	4. ASGW	_____	_____
_____	5. NVGA	_____	_____
_____	6. MePGA	_____	_____
_____	7. MESCA	_____	_____
_____	8. MSCA	_____	_____
_____	9. Southwestern MPGA	_____	_____
_____	10. Central MPGA	_____	_____
_____	11. Eastern MPGA	_____	_____
_____	12. Northern MPGA	_____	_____
_____	13. Downeast MPGA	_____	_____
_____	14. Other	_____	_____
	(specify)_____		

14. Check below any professional conferences or conventions you have attended in 1981 and 1982.

___1. APGA Convention (St. Louis, 1981)
___2. Maine Personnel & Guidance Conference (Bangor, 1981)
___3. Maine Elem School Counselor Conference (Brunswick, 1981)
___4. New England Personnel and Guidance Conference (Portland, 1980)
___5. APGA National Convention (Detroit, 1982)
___6. New England Personnel and Guidance Conference (Hartford, 1981)
___7. Maine Personnel and Guidance Conference (Waterville, 1982) (Anticipate attending)
___8. Maine Elementary School Counselor Conference (Rockport, 1982)

15. Number of Regional (SWMPGA, NMPGA, etc.) Conferences attended during this school year:

___1. One
___2. Two
___3. Three
___4. Four
___5. None

16. Indicate the requested information for any University credit courses taken during the Summer, 1981 and the academic year, 1981-82:

Name of Institution	Subject Course	Number of Credits	Summer 1981	Fall 1981	Spring 1982
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

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17. Indicate your involvement beginning Summer, 1981 through the academic year, 1981-82, in non-credit short-term training programs, workshops, or seminars by supplying the following information. (Do not include LEA sponsored in-service activities).

Type of Training or Experience	No. of Hours	Sponsoring Agency	Were CEU's Awarded (circle one)	
			Yes	No
			Yes	No
			Yes	No
			Yes	No
			Yes	No

18. Check the estimated total number of hours of your involvement with each guidance and counseling in-service activity specified beginning with June, 1981, through the academic year, 1981-82.

INSERVICE ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF HOURS				
	0	1-16	17-32	33-48	49+(specif
1. In-service for guidance staff during school hours.					
2. Local guidance meetings and inservice after school hours involving counselors.					
3. Counselor released from school time for professional development activities.					
4. Summer in-service for faculty regarding guidance and counseling services.					
5. Local district time set aside for in-service of faculty regarding guidance and counseling program and practices.					

19. Indicate the extent of your self-education through printed material. Please list the professional journals or newsletters you read regularly.

1. _____ 4. _____

2. _____ 5. _____

3. _____ 6. _____

20. Please indicate the average estimated number of hours spent per month in self-education through written, auditory, and visual media.

___1. Number of hours per month during school year.
___2. Number of hours per month during vacation period.

21. Please describe any other professional development activity you have engaged in but did not mention in items 14-20.

_____

_____

_____

If additional space is needed please put on an additional page and attach.

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22. Check any of the following which characterizes how you go about choosing which continuing education or professional development opportunities to pursue. Check as many as apply.

___1. I decide to pursue additional training in a certain area when it becomes a recurring problem or set of problems on the job (e.g., several students comes to me with alcohol-related concerns).
___2. When I am assigned a new area of responsibility (e.g., multi-disciplinary team coordination).
___3. When I need additional credits or units for advancement or certification.
___4. I hear about a speaker whose presentation I want to attend.
___5. I hear of a topic I want to know more about.
___6. I limit my participation to one or two out-of-school professional development activities per year.
___7. I usually attend all or almost of the meetings, conferences, or workshops in my immediate (0-50 mile) geographical area.
___8. I limit my participation to those functions which are part of a contract agreement or for which I can get released time from my job.
___9. Other (specify)_____

23. Check any of the following which might be reasons why you would not take advantage of a professional development opportunity of interest to you.

___1. Costs too much money for me personally.
___2. Occurs during school time when I cannot get released.
___3. Occurs on evenings or weekends and interferes with other activities I have planned.
___4. Distance or transportation is a problem.
___5. Would have to go alone.
___6. Not sufficiently interested in the topic.
___7. Too much to do on my job.
___8. Other (specify)_____

24. Check the interval which best estimates how much you were reimbursed by your school district beginning with Summer, 1981, through the academic year, 1981-82 for professional development expenses (i.e. registration, travel, etc.). (Do not include reimbursement for materials, films, etc., purchased for the school).

___1. $0-50
___2. $51-100
___3. $101-150
___4. $151-200
___5. $201-300
___6. $301-400
___7. $401-500
___8. Over $500

25. Check the interval which best estimates how much money you personally have spent beginning with Summer, 1981, through the academic year, 1981-82 on professional development activities. Include in your estimate such things as due to professional organizations, purchase of materials, attendance at conferences including transportation, meals and lodging, courses for credit, etc. Do not include any expense for which you were reimbursed.

___1. $ 0-100
___2. $101-200
___3. $201-300
___4. $301-400
___5. $401-500
___6. Over $500

What item was your major expense?_____

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Listed below are a number of topics relevant to counseling and guidance in schools. Please circle the numbers of the topics in which you believe additional training would be useful to you in your work.

26. ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH

001 applied statistics
002 measurement theory
003 observational techniques
004 projective techniques
005 evaluation of program goals and objectives
006 test interpretation
007 appraisal of pupil progress
008 evaluation of counseling effectiveness
009 guidance needs of students/staff
010 application of research to local concerns
011 value of resource materials
012 micro-computer usage
013 other_____

27. CONSULTATION SKILLS

101 referral to community agencies
102 with school administrators
103 with parents
104 with teachers
105 with community and business leaders
106 other_____

28. COUNSELING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

201 Adlerian approaches
202 assertive training
203 behavior modification
204 case management procedures
205 communication/relationship skills
206 confrontation
207 gestalt approaches
208 crisis intervention
209 decision-making
210 marriage & family counseling
211 peer counseling
212 psychodrama, sociodrama
213 rational-emotive approaches
214 Rogerian, humanistic, phenomenological counseling
215 self help programs
216 study skills
217 theory (general)
218 transactional analysis
219 other_____

29. GROUP METHODS & APPROACHES

301 encounter techniques
302 human potential techniques
303 informational groups
304 parent effectiveness training
305 parent group techniques
306 personal awareness approaches (values clarification)
307 mental health
308 small group counseling
309 teacher effectiveness training groups
310 counselor in the classroom
311 other_____

30. PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

401 certification of counselors
402 licensure of counselors
403 human rights
404 child advocacy
405 legal concerns
406 professional role/responsibility
407 ethical standards
408 standards & accreditation of programs
409 effective lobbying techniques
410 other_____

31. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

501 change agent skills
502 using school power structure
503 financial management (budgets, etc.)
504 leadership options & styles
505 organizational structures of programs
506 relationship with curriculum/instruction
507 management by objectives (MBO)
508 referral sources/systems
509 outreach programs
510 public relations procedures
511 staffing & staff development (guidance and counseling)
512 conflict management
513 pupil records system

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31. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (continued)

514 sources of funding/writing grant proposals/grant management
515 writing program objectives and goals
516 use of paraprofessionals
517 articulation of program, K-12
518 advisory committee
519 legal concerns in guidance and counseling
520 other_____

32. SERVICES RELEVANT TO EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

601 computer-assisted guidance and counseling
602 disciplinary/attendance problems
603 services for dropouts and potential dropouts
604 school/student ecology
605 moral/responsibility education
606 new staff/student orientation
607 psychological education as part of the curriculum
608 student activity program
609 student/institutional confrontation
610 student rights and responsibilities
611 counselor leadership/involvement for school inservice
612 other_____

33. SPECIAL POPULATIONS

701 counseling students from single parent homes
702 counseling racial and ethnic minorities
703 drug abuse and alcoholism counseling
704 approaches for students with learning disabilities
705 approaches for students with physical disabilities
706 approaches with gifted and talented students
707 counseling youthful offenders
708 counseling the abused child
709 teenage pregnancies/parenting
710 other_____

34. VOCATIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

801 planning a comprehensive career development program
802 eliminate sex/role stereotyping
803 community resources developme
804 establishing a career center
805 follow-up procedures
806 placement services
807 job analysis techniques
808 self awareness
809 career exploration
810 financial aids
811 vocational information
812 articulation with post secondary institutions
813 awareness of vocational training opportunities
814 work experience programs
815 other_____

35. SPECIAL EDUCATION/PUPIL EVALUATION TEAM

901 Legal
902 Testing/Evaluation
903 Staffing/Administration
904 Individual Education Plan
905 Counseling
906 Other_____

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Please review the items in 26 through 34 that you circled and select the six topics in which training would be the most useful for you. In the left column below indicate these six topics by their code numbers (place the most useful item at the top of the list).

In the right column, please indicate by letter the method you believe to be the most appropriate in presenting the topic. Choose among the following methods.

METHOD

A - regular college/university
B - extension classes
C - short term workshop
D - conferences
E - summer institute
F - on-site inservice workshops
G - no reaction

35. MOST USEFUL AREAS IN RANK ORDER (Indicate 3-digit code for each)	36. MOST APPROPRIATE METHOD (Indicate letter code for each)
Most useful _____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

37. Would you participate in formalized programs referred to questions 26-34 if they were offered (check one):

___1. Definitely Yes
___2. Probably Yes
___3. Undecided
___4. Probably No
___5. Definitely No

38. What institutions or organizations do you feel should be responsible for setting up formal programs. (Please rank order with 1 being highest).

___1. College and Universities
___2. State Department of Public Instruction
___3. Vocational and Technical Schools
___4. Business and Industries
___5. Professional Organizations
___6. Other (specify)_____

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Listed below are topics of interest to various segments of our society. On the left rate the extent to which you agree or disagree that counselors should be concerned and involved with them. Do this column first and then complete the right hand column. On the right rate the degree to which these topics apply to you now.

1 - Strongly Agree	1 - Need More Information
2 - Agree	2 - Need Better Skills
3 - Indifferent	3 - Currently Involved
4 - Disagree	4 - Not Applicable
5 - Strongly Disagree	

POSITION	STATUS
___1. Accountability of counselors	_____
___2. Reciprocity of certification	_____
___3. Competency based training	_____
___4. Teaching experience is needed for counselor certification	_____
___5. Licensure for counselors	_____
___6. Collective bargaining	_____
___7. Protection of human rights	_____
___8. Counselor as a change agent	_____
___9. Child advocacy role	_____
__10. Government relations activities for counselors	_____
__11. Violence in schools	_____
__12. Professional growth through professional activities	_____
__13. Counselor responsibility for student discipline supervision	_____
__14. Computerized information systems	_____
__15. Impact of TV on children	_____
__16. Community based guidance programs	_____
__17. Counselor leadership in career education	_____
__18. Combination counselor/teacher role	_____
__19. Paraprofessionals/technicians in guidance	_____
__20. Counselor as consultant	_____
__21. Elementary school guidance and counseling	_____
__22. Family and parent counseling	_____
__23. Confidentiality for counselors	_____
__24. Privileged communication for counselors	_____
__25. Work with gifted and talented persons	_____
__26. Back to basics in education (3 Rs)	_____
__27. Child abuse/neglect	_____
__28. PET process	_____
__29. Other (specify)_____	_____

Thank you for completing this survey